

2: Métraux

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SF24 Uru SF24

[For additional, scattered information about the use of colored items, the role of color, and possible color symbolism associated with rituals or organized religious ceremonies, see category 116, pp. 31-120.]

Carangas-
Chipaya

/385 cont. /

*778 house and his patio. A few pinches of maize flour were thrown
 *796 in the hole.

[791] /386/ The yatiri then walked around those present to greet
 [596] them according to all the rules of Chipaya etiquette. The master
 of the flock and his wife offered him some alcohol and coca and
 invited their relatives and friends to take some of the leaves which
 they had spread out on the ground. They drank and chewed for
 [197] half an hour without exchanging a word and with all the gloomy
 gravity to which these Indians are accustomed. Next a stuffed
 lamb decorated with wool pompoms — the samiri — was brought
 out of a pile of material which enveloped it; the wife of the owner
 of the sheepfold added several supplementary tufts of red wool to
 it and all approached it in turn to offer a libation on its body, to
 offer it coca, and to recite a long prayer for it. It was then buried
 in the hole along with khoa, "copal," sprigs of rosemary, and a
 few pinches of coca which the Officiant threw with each lump of
 earth, continuously murmuring his prayers. His movements were
 imitated by the spectators, who rivaled him in zeal.

The hole was not entirely full. At one side of it on a small
 tablecloth the instigator of the festival had piled up the innumerable
 products with magical qualities which the Chipaya customarily
 offer to their divinities. The yatiri, after having subjected them
 *778 to a detailed review, prepared paper sacks in which he put first
 *796 pink, yellow, and green lozenges, pieces of pink and white
 791 candies, and lastly sprigs of rosemary and some starch.

*778 He then proceeded to a minute selection from the ten to 12
 *796 colored mineral powders which had been put at his disposal. He
 791 kept only four: a deep green, a light green, a violet, and a
 825 brown. He poured them into separate little paper horns, with the
 exception of the light green, which he mixed with the brown.
 These colors undoubtedly had a special significance to judge from
 the attention which the yatiri gave to their selection and from the
 explanations which he gave to the master of the place. I have
 every reason to suppose that these four colors correspond to the

Carangas-
Chipaya

/386 cont./

* 778 vegetables, the knowledge and acquisition of which means the
 * 786 most to the Chipaya. The green represents the fields, the brown
 * 791 quinoa seeds, the violet certain parts of quinoa and cañave leaves.

With some mutton fat the yatiri modeled a lamb to whose neck he attached a tuft of wool. He put it in a bowl into which those present threw coca, and he offered libations to it and recited a long prayer where wishes for the prosperity of the flock were mingled with enumerations of the ma'ku and invocations to the Pačamama. Now taking pig fat the yatiri encrusted it with portions of gold leaf and stuck dried flowers in it. The choice of the flowers was as meticulous as that of the colored powders. When the slice of pig fat was covered with them, /387/ the wife of the master of the enclosure wrapped it with a tuft of red wool. The sheep made of fat, the flowers stuck in the pig fat, and the sacks of mineral powders were placed in a tin box and sprinkled with coca leaves. Among those present arose a real competition as to who would contribute the most coca leaves and recite his prayers with the most fervor. Then the bottle of eau-de-vie was uncorked, and all drank from it, beginning with the Officiant, without neglecting libations and the customary prayers before each bumper.

A few drops of alcohol were sprinkled on the offerings, to which the following things were added: Illicita, candies, incense, khoa, copal, and sugar. The box was buried even with the ground and covered with a slab. The whole thing was carefully concealed under the ground, and the yatiri uttered a long prayer addressed, as previously, to the Pačamama and protecting demons on the site of the samiri. The ceremony ended, like all the Chipaya ceremonies, with mutual invitations to drink and chew.

231
782 Religious practices relating to putting domestic animals to death.

When the Chipaya slaughter an animal in order to eat the meat, they perform a ritual which is in every respect analogous to the one which I have so often described in connection with sacrifices. The sheep or the pig receives an offering of coca and